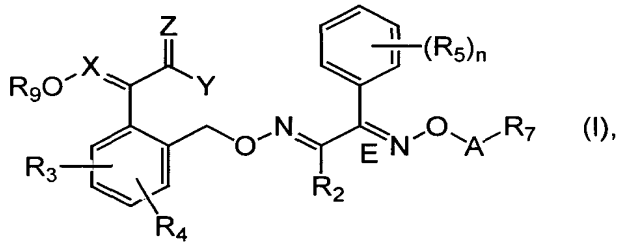
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

Claim 1 (currently amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula



and, where appropriate, their tautomers, in each case in the free form or salt form, in which

either [

] X is CH or N, Y is OR, and Z is O, or [

] X is N, Y is NHR_8 and Z is O, S or S(=O);

R_1 is C_1-C_4alkyl;

R_2 is H, C_1-C_4alkyl, halogeno-C_1-C_4alkyl, C_3-C_6cycloalkyl or C_1-C_4alkoxymethyl;

R_3 and R_4 independently of one another are H, C_1-C_4alkyl, C_1-C_4alkoxy, OH, CN, NO_2, a $(C_1$-C_4alkyl$)_3$-Si group, where the alkyl groups can be identical or different, halogen, $(C_1$-C_4alkyl$)S(=O)_m$, (halogeno-C_1-C_4alkyl$)S(=O)_m$, halogeno-C_1-C_4alkyl or halogeno-C_1-C_4alkoxy;

R_5 is C_1-C_6alkyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6alkyl, C_1-C_6alkoxy, halogeno-C_1-C_6alkoxy, C_1-C_6alkylthio, halogen-C_1-C_6alkylthio, C_1-C_6alkylsulfinyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6alkylsulfinyl, C_1-C_6alkylsulfonyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6alkylsulfonyl, C_1-C_6alkoxy-C_1-C_6alkyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6alkoxy-C_1-C_6alkyl, C_1-C_6alkylthio-C_1-C_6alkyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6alkylthio-C_1-C_6alkyl, C_1-C_6alkylsulfinyl-C_1-C_6alkyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6-alkylsulfinyl-C_1-C_6alkyl, C_1-C_6-alkylsulfonyl-C_1-C_6alkyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6-alkylsulfonyl-C_1-C_6alkyl, C_1-C_6-alkylcarbonyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6-alkylcarbonyl, C_1-C_6-alkoxycarbonyl, halogeno-C_1-C_6-alkoxycarbonyl, C_1-C_6-alkylaminocarbonyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxyiminomethyl; di(C_1-C_6alkyl)-amino-carbonyl, where the alkyl groups can be identical or different; C_1-C_6-alkyl-aminothiocarbonyl; di(C_1-C_6alkyl)aminothiocarbonyl, where the alkyl groups

can be identical or different; C_1-C_6-alkylamino, di(C_1-C_6alkyl)-amino, where the alkyl groups can be identical or different; halogen, NO_2, CN, SF_5, thioamido, thiocyanatomethyl; an unsubstituted or mono- to tetrasubstituted C_1-C_4alkylenedioxy group, where the substituents are selected from the group consisting of C_1-C_4alkyl and halogen; or QR_6, where, if n is greater than 1, the radicals R_5 can be identical or different;

R_6 is C_2-C_6alkenyl or C_2-C_6 alkynyl, which are unsubstituted or substituted by 1 to 3 halogen atoms; (C_1-C_4alkyl)$_3$Si, where the alkyl groups can be identical or different; CN or an unsubstituted or mono- to pentasubstituted C_3-C_6cyclo-alkyl, aryl or heterocyclyl group, where the substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen, C_1-C_6alkyl, halogeno- C_1-C_6alkyl, C_1-C_6alkoxy, halogeno-C_1-C_6alkoxy, phenoxy, naphthoxy and CN;

A [~~either~~] is a direct bond, C_1-C_{10}alkylene, -C(=O)-, -C(=S)- or halogeno-C_1-C_{10}alkylene and R_7 is a radical R_{10}, [
] or A is C_1-C_{10}alkylene, -C(=O)-, -C(=S)- or halogeno- C_1-C_{10}alkylene and R_7 is OR_{10}, $N(R_{10})_2$, where the radicals R_{10} can be identical or different, or $-S(=O)_qR_{10}$;

R_8 is H or C_1-C_4alkyl;

R_9 is methyl, fluoromethyl or difluoromethyl;

R_{10} is H; an unsubstituted or substituted C_1-C_6alkyl, C_2-C_6alkenyl or C_2-C_6alkynyl group, where the substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen; (C_1-C_4alkyl)$_3$Si, where the alkyl groups can be identical or different; C_3-C_6cyclo-alkyl, which is unsubstituted or substituted by halogen; C_1-C_6alkoxycarbonyl, which is unsubstituted or substituted by halogen; unsubstituted or substituted aryl, where the substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen, halogeno-C_1-C_4alkyl and CN; a (C_1-C_6alkyl)$_3$Si group, where the alkyl groups can be identical or different; C_3-C_6cycloalkyl, which is unsubstituted or substituted by halogen; C_1-C_6alkoxycarbonyl which is unsubstituted or substituted by halogen; or an unsubstituted or substituted aryl or heterocyclyl group, where the substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen and halogeno-C_1-C_4alkyl;

Q is a direct bond, C_1-C_8alkylene, C_2-C_6alkenylene, C_2-C_6alkynylene, O, O(C_1-C_6alkylene), (C_1-C_6alkylene)O, $S(=O)_p$, $S(=O)_p$(C_1-C_6alkylene) or (C_1-C_6alkylene)$S(=O)_p$;

m is 0, 1 or 2;

n is 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5;

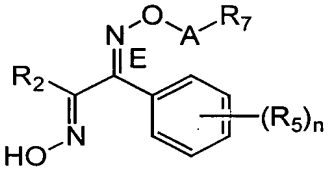
p is 0, 1 or 2; and

q is 0, 1 or 2,

and the C=N double bond marked with E has the E configuration,

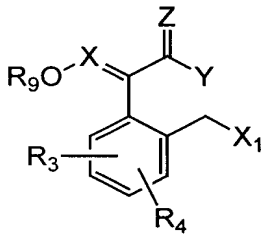
which comprises

a1) reacting [~~either~~] a compound of the formula



(II),

in which A, R_2, R_5, R_7 and n are as defined for formula (I) and the C=N double bond marked with E has the E configuration, or a [~~possible~~] tautomer thereof, in each case in the free form or in salt form, with a compound of the formula

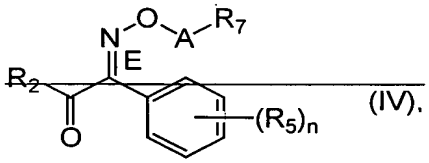


(III),

in which X, Y, Z, R_3, R_4 and R_9 are as defined for formula (I) and X_1 is a leaving group, or a tautomer thereof, in each case in the free from or in salt form, [~~or~~]

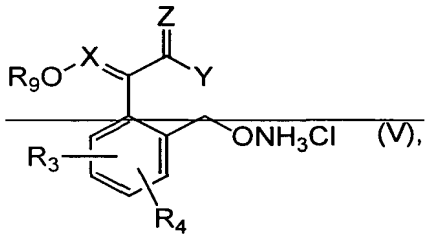
wherein the compound of formula (II) is obtained by

[~~a2) reacting a compound of the formula~~



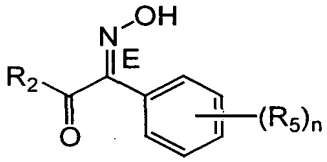
(IV),

~~in which A, R_2, R_5, R_7 and n are as defined for formula (I) and the C=N double bond marked with E has the E configuration, or a possible tautomer thereof, in each case in the free form or in the salt form, with a compound of the formula~~



~~in which X, Y, Z, R_3, R_4 and R_9 are as defined for formula (I), or, if appropriate, a tautomer thereof, in each case in the free form or in salt form, or~~]

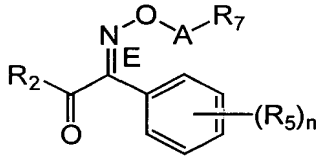
b1) reacting a compound of the formula



in which R_2, R_5 and n are as defined for formula (I) and the C=N double bond marked with E has the E configuration, or a [~~possible~~] tautomer thereof, in each case in the free form or in salt form, with a compound of the formula

R_7-A-X_2 (VII),

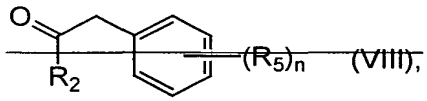
in which A and R_7 are as defined for formula (I) and X_2 is a leaving group, [~~and either further reacting the~~] to form a compound [~~thus obtainable,~~] of the formula (IV) [~~, for example according to method a2), or~~]



in which A, R_2, R_5, R_7 and n are as defined for formula (I) and the C=N double bond marked with E has the E configuration, or a tautomer thereof, and

b2) further reacting [~~it~~] the compound of the formula (IV) with hydroxylamine or a salt thereof [~~and further reacting~~] to form the compound [~~thus obtainable,~~] of the formula (II), [~~for example according to method a1), or~~]

[~~c) reacting a compound of the formula~~



~~in which R_2, R_5 and n are as defined for formula (I),~~

~~or a possible tautomer thereof, in each case in the free form or in salt form, with a C_1-C_6alkyl nitrite and further reacting the compound thus obtainable, of the formula (VI), for example according to method b)~~].

Claims 2-22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (currently amended) A process according to claim [~~22~~] 1, wherein a compound of the formula (VII) in which X_2 is halogen is used.

Claim 24 (currently amended) A process according to claim [~~22~~] 1, wherein a compound of the formula (VII) in which X_2 is chlorine is used.

Claim 25 (currently amended) A process according to claim [~~22~~] 1, wherein the reaction of the compound of the formula (VI) with the compound of the formula (VII) is carried out in the presence of a base.

Claim 26 (original) A process according to claim 25, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of a base selected from the group consisting of alkali metal and alkaline earth metal hydroxides, hydrides, amides, alkanolates, acetates, carbonates, dialkylamides and alkylsilylamides.

Claim 27 (original) A process according to claim 26, wherein the base is potassium carbonate.

Claim 28 (currently amended) A process according to claim [~~22~~] 1, wherein the reaction of the compound of the formula (VI) with the compound of the formula (VII) is carried out in the presence of a solvent or diluent or of a mixture thereof.

Claim 29 (original) A process according to claim 28, wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of acetonitrile and propionitrile.

Claim 30 (currently amended) A process according to claim [~~29~~] 28, wherein the reaction is carried out in acetonitrile.

Claim 31 (currently amended) A process according to claim [~~22~~] 1, wherein the reaction of the compound of the formula (VI) with the compound of the formula (VII) is carried out in a temperature range from about 10° to about 80°.

Claim 32 (currently amended) A process according to claim [~~22~~] 1, wherein the duration of the reaction of the compound of the formula (VI) with the compound of the formula (VII) is between about 0.5 and about 2 hours.

Claims 33-71 (canceled)